

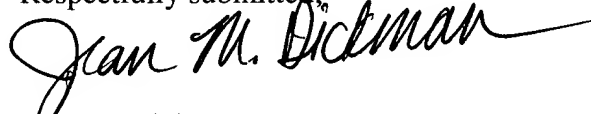
Serial No. 09/981,248
Filed: 10/16/2001

canceled the non-elected claims (Group I, claims 1-17, 31-47, and 61-77, and Group II, claims 18-24, 48-54, and 78-84), although Applicants reserve the right to file continuation or divisional applications directed to the subject matter of the non-elected claims prior to the issuance of a patent on those claims elected for further prosecution at this time.

It is believed that no fee is due. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any amount required to Account No. 19-2112. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

An action on the merits is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jean M. Dickman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jean M. Dickman
Reg. No. 48,538

JMD/sls

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